

REMARKS

In a final Office Action dated October 19, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7-9, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haumont et al. (U.S. patent application publication no. 2002/0032032, hereinafter referred to as “Haumont”) and rejected claims 15-17, 21-23, and 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Haumont. The Examiner objected to claims 4-6, 10-12, 18-20, and 24-26 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The rejections and objections are traversed and reconsideration is hereby respectfully requested.

In order to put the application in condition for allowance, the applicants have canceled claims 1, 2, 8, 15, 16, and 22 and have rewritten objected to claims 4-6, 10-12, 18-20, and 24-26 in independent form including all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objections to claims 4-6, 10-12, 18-20, and 24-26.

Since claims 3, 7, and 14 depend upon allowable claim 5, claims 9 and 13 depend upon allowable claim 11, claims 17 and 21 depend upon allowable claim 19, claims 23, 27, and 28 depend upon allowable claim 25, claim 29 depends upon allowable claim 18, and claim 30 depends upon allowable claim 24, the applicants respectfully request that claims 3, 7, 9, 13, 14, 17, 21, 23, and 27-30 may now be passed to allowance.

As the applicants have overcome all substantive rejections and objections given by the Examiner and have complied with all requests properly presented by the Examiner, the applicants contend that this Amendment, with the above discussion, overcomes the Examiner's objections to and rejections of the pending claims. Therefore, the applicants respectfully solicit allowance of the application. If the Examiner is of the opinion that any issues regarding the status of the claims remain after this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative to expedite resolution of the matter. Furthermore, please charge any additional fees (including extension of time fees), if any are due, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2117.

Respectfully submitted,
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